

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 14 and 16-26 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 14, 16, 18 and 23-26 are amended. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 23-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, claims 23-26 are amended for clarity only to address the rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 14, 19-21, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over MacDonald et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,020,324). In addition, claims 14, 19-21 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Buscher et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,629,411). Further, claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over MacDonald et al. in view of Miller (U.S. Patent No. 3,971,216) or Buscher et al. in view of Miller. These rejections are respectfully traversed. Even though Applicants disagree with the rejections, claim 15, which is indicated to be allowable in the Office Action, has been incorporated into independent claim 14, thereby placing the entire application in condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all the claims are patentable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

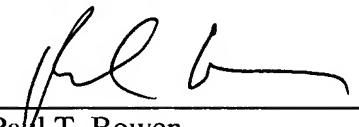
MAMEI et al.
Appl. No. 10/534,875
November 2, 2006

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, he is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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